United Nations E/AC.51/2006/L.4/Add.8

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
21 August 2006

Original: English

Committee for Programme and Coordination
Forty-sixth session
14 August-8 September 2006
Agenda item 8
Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-sixth session

Draft report

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Addendum

Programme questions: programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 2004-2005

(Item 3 (a))

Programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 2004-2005

1. At its 6th meeting, on 16 August 2006, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 2004-2005 (A/61/64).

2. The representative of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) introduced the programme performance report and responded to the questions raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

3. Delegations commended OIOS for improving the programme performance report and for responding positively to requests by the General Assembly and the Committee for Programme and Coordination to improve performance reporting and advance a results-based culture in the United Nations. However, regret was expressed that the use of programme performance data in decision-making seemed to be the exception rather than the rule.

4. The extensive use of hyperlinks in the electronic version of the programme performance report, as posted on the Internet, was welcomed as a means of

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providing easy and wide access to related documents and detailed information on programme performance and the achievements of the United Nations. The increased use of information on client satisfaction, as a way to assess the performance of the United Nations, was welcomed by the delegations.

5. Delegations reiterated the need to establish a link between financial and programmatic information so as to better assess programme performance. This linkage was of importance for the success of results-based management within the Organization. The efforts of the Secretariat in this regard should be strengthened, it was pointed out.

6. The comprehensiveness and inclusive nature of the report, which provided information on more than 33,000 outputs for 29 budget sections with breakdowns and details, was deemed useful for Member States in supporting their decision-making on priorities and funding, representatives stated. There was a need to apply a coherent methodology for measuring and reporting outputs, including those that are not easily quantifiable. The reporting of technical cooperation outputs as part of a separate section in the programme performance report was appreciated. The view was expressed that indicators of achievement should be firmly aligned with the expected accomplishments, as these were often vague. In addition, indicators of achievement often lacked an immediate connection to performance measures, which should be more uniform.

7. The overall Secretariat implementation rate of 91 per cent for the biennium 2004-2005, as compared to 85 per cent attained in 2002-2003, was noted with satisfaction and appreciation. It was noted that this was a reflection of improved programme planning and a step in the right direction towards more efficient programme implementation.

8. The deepening involvement of programme managers, while appreciated, needed further improvement to ensure achievement of results and optimal use of resources. It was emphasized that, in the future, the participation of senior programme managers in results-based management training should be enhanced. Furthermore, the development of a Secretariat-wide system to support results based management was needed.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. **The Committee commended the Office of Internal Oversight Services for improving the programme performance report and for responding positively to requests by the General Assembly and the Committee for Programme and Coordination to improve performance reporting and advance a results-based culture in the United Nations. The Committee also recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure that all programme managers and their staff improve their performance in the area of utilizing programme performance data in decision-making.**

10. **While recognizing the improvements in the issuance of the report in relation to the previous biennium, the Committee noted with concern that the report was not issued in accordance with the six-week rule[1] and stressed the**

[1] Rule 13, paragraph 4, of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council (E/5715/Rev.2).

need for compliance. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to emphasize the need for all departments to provide the required information on time in order to facilitate proper and more effective consideration of the report by Member States.

11. The Committee noted with appreciation that the programme performance report included in each section a box with a brief description of challenges, obstacles and unmet goals, as requested by the Committee during its forty-fourth session. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to continue to develop this information in particular for unmet goals, in order to improve consistency and standardize the presentation of information across all programmes.

12. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure that, in addition to quantitative parameters, more importance should be given in future programme performance reports to the qualitative assessment of programme implementation. The Committee stressed the need to enhance quality control and evaluation criteria for the implementation of programmes.

13. The Committee stressed the importance of a more introspective and analytical approach, focusing on existing problems as well as on the potential for increasing the effectiveness of the implementation of programmes.